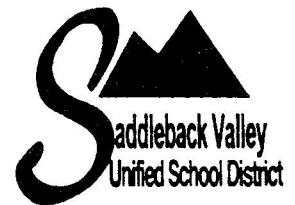


LAGUNA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

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Ed Adams, Principal



*"Preparing today's students to
succeed in tomorrow's world."*

A National School of Excellence

Teoyolli Luna
Laguna Hills High School
Laguna Hills, CA
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April 16, 2008

I am truly pleased to have the opportunity to recommend Ariel Simons as a candidate for a teaching position at the high school level. Ariel is currently assisting and teaching in a combination Algebra 1/1A Sheltered Class at Laguna Hills High School. This particular class is very diverse in terms of the students' cultural and academic backgrounds. Approximately half of the students are classified as English Learners (EL) whose primary language is Spanish. Approximately one-third of the students have been identified as at-risk by our Guidance Department. Their ages range from 14 to 18 years old. It is in this challenging environment that I have had the opportunity to observe Ariel's many strengths.

Ariel is a well rounded intelligent person who has become indispensable to me and to my EL students in particular. He works with a group of EL students who view him as their primary teacher and someone they can trust. Ariel has the ability to make his students feel very comfortable while keeping them on task. They do not hesitate to ask him for help. Even students who have been transferred to other Algebra classes continue to ask for his help. EL students and their parents have even contacted our Bilingual Community Liaison, Norma Ramirez, to ask that Ariel assist in their Algebra class. They know he is patient, methodical, and caring. He wants students to learn and takes the time to explain concepts thoroughly. I am continuously impressed by his ability to reach and engage students of all ages and backgrounds in a very positive manner.

Another one of Ariel's strengths, which has greatly impacted our class, is his inquisitive nature. Ariel continuously questions why we do things the way we do. He intuitively knows that concepts have to make sense to students in order for them to remember them. He is not interested in having students memorize disconnected facts, something so routinely done in many math classes. Ariel helps students organize new information in a way that makes sense to them. His techniques are creative, like using water to explain positive and negative integers. Watching him teach has forced me to rethink many of my own lessons.

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